



# REPRESENTATIVE 40TH DISTRICT JEFF MORRIS

## REPORTS TO THE 40TH DISTRICT

### REPRESENTATIVE JEFF MORRIS

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Dear Neighbor,

Six billion dollars. That is the amount of money taken out of state government since I have represented you the last seven sessions in Olympia. I say this to you upfront because it is important to realize the enormity that \$2 billion of tax cuts and \$4 billion in spending cuts represent.

With a current overall two-year budget of \$23 billion, the Legislature has reduced the size of state government in gross dollars by approximately 25% the last seven years.

While any large organization that looks hard enough will find waste, fraud and abuse, you should know that we have been finding, as one colleague put it, "juice worth the squeeze." You should also know that the price-of-government exercise long advocated by my seatmate, Dave Quall, and myself was finally enacted this past legislative session. After years of cuts, we are truly starting to reach necessary government functions now whenever we make additional cuts.

Finding the cuts this past session was not an easy task, but I want to thank you for the opportunity you have given me to represent you in weighing competing needs.

I also want to thank you for letting me work on issues that do not generate many headlines in the short term, like affordable and sustainable energy prices, access to cutting-edge technologies and creating long-term opportunity.

This past session I was rated the "Top Job Maker" in the entire House. I am proud of this not for the accolade but because I have pursued an agenda that valued good jobs and economic opportunity over partisan politics, which are often driven by special-interest groups.

In this newsletter you will see why our area is a special place to live. The diversity of issues you have allowed me to pursue for you has helped the entire state. Thank you.

Regards,

Jeff Morris





# REPRESENTATIVE JEFF MORRIS



## TECHNOLOGY = 21<sup>ST</sup>-CENTURY JOBS

I have had the privilege of chairing the House Technology, Telecommunications, and Energy Committee the last two years. In that role, I have tried to provide leadership based around three principals:

- 1) Taking actions to encourage capital investment in Washington state;
- 2) Making sure that laws passed by the Legislature are technology neutral; and
- 3) Taking actions that help new technologies grow in our state first.



## PRINCIPALS ARE GREAT..... BUT WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

In the new world economy we are not only competing against every other U.S. state, but every other country for a finite amount of capital investment every year. If our state takes an eternity making permitting decisions, granting right-of-way access or looking at every business coming in the door as a chance to stick it to somebody for money, that capital investment will go to Colorado, Arizona, Singapore, India or the Ukraine.

That means we will not get access to the technology we need to navigate the new economy – or the good jobs that technology can produce. When I hear from you that you still don't have caller ID, voice mail or broadband in this area, the kinds of impediments in the preceding paragraph are exactly the reason why.

This past session we passed new laws that encourage investment in state-controlled telecommunications right of ways, earning the state much-needed money in leases and actually lowering your property taxes by adding property value to the books. This is the kind of progress we need to make.

## THE FUTURE IS HERE.

Government can unwittingly harm markets by passing laws that lock in one technology to do certain tasks. While a Ph.D. dissertation could be written on this in the telephone area, I have a more simple example. Our judiciary committee was considering a bill granting corporate boards the authority to meet by teleconference.



Seems reasonable? The problem was, they were favoring telecommunications over other forms of electronic communications. New products that allow video technologies for conferencing over the Internet or direct fiber would have been locked out, and in a few years another bill would have to be passed to allow the move towards 'Net meetings. We fixed this.

Moving new technology sectors along has been active area for me the past two years. We have created incentives to produce bio-diesel fuel in this state, encouraged the use of renewable technologies like wind power, removed barriers to biotechnology growth, and made the state a leader in purchasing fuel cells for backup power.

I am particularly proud of creating the Investment in Innovation Fund, which will help transfer leading-edge technologies out of our universities or laboratories and into actual commercialized products. For every dollar the state spends in this area we get as much as \$22 more for the research being done.

# REPORTS TO THE 40TH DISTRICT



It is a changing world. Many of the technologies I have seen literally escape one's mind to comprehend, but to stay economically viable we must continue to be out front in innovation.



## FERRIES

With fully a quarter of the Washington State Ferry (WSF) system's assets located here in our legislative district – and with a clearly acknowledged transportation-funding crisis afflicting our state – I have rejoined the House Transportation Committee after a two-year hiatus. I was named to the panel's ferry subcommittee and have continued to press WSF to innovate.

The new WSF director is off to a good start, pressing towards sustainability. I'm pleased to report that in 2003 the Legislature made the first move toward making WSF whole again, after the devastation of losing revenue from the car-tab tax cut. Ten percent of the new transportation revenue authorized last session is being invested in our ferry system to plug the \$65 million hole created by I-695.

I worked in the House to have funding for five new auto ferries included in the transportation budget, vessels that would replace four boats built in 1928. Replacing these 75-year-old ferries and adding an additional boat would add capacity back to our fleet and save money by modernizing; the Senate (which is largely controlled by senators from non-ferry-dependent eastern Washington districts) would agree only to four. I also worked in the House to preserve year-round service to Sidney, a run that subsidizes an extra stop in the San Juans, but again the Senate balked, refusing to guarantee year-round service to Sidney.

## DID YOU KNOW?

**Between 1999 and 2001, the Washington State Ferries carried over 11 million vehicles and 26 million people.**

**Check out the ferries online at:  
[www.ferrycam.net](http://www.ferrycam.net)**



In other ferry developments, we have directed WSF to look at its fuel management with an eye toward making significant improvements, and we have facilitated three-way talks with WSF and the British Columbia and Alaska ferry systems to see where we might work together to realize cost savings. And finally, talk is starting to surface over a reservation system for the Islands, or a tiered rate structure for guaranteed vs. space-available boarding.

While a few people have the ability and time to be very vocal on ferry issues, I have enjoyed getting everyone's opinions through letter, calls and e-mails. Your opinions matter, so please continue to share them.



## BOEING

I had the honor last year of leading a task force to enact a package to try and keep the aerospace industry active in our state. Like it or not, Boeing's presence here has paid for much of the infrastructure we have today. Before Microsoft (or the second coming of a Bill, as some say, after Bill Boeing), Boeing was the leading software producer in our state! They also have been the largest direct employer in Skagit County. Beyond those numbers, however, one must look at the indirect jobs in template manufacturing, interior-material fabrications and other small-to-medium business that supply Boeing to realize the company's impact locally.



## REPRESENTATIVE JEFF MORRIS

### BOEING *continued*

While I do not favor reactive economic development policy, we did offer a \$3 billion incentive package to keep Boeing in Washington state. The 7E7 airplane will be the first of three planes that will replace the six being made here today. If our efforts to land the 7E7 line are successful – and we may know that answer by the time you read this newsletter – we expect to receive approximately \$20 billion in revenue over the next 20 year period by keeping them here, which would make that \$3 billion a wise investment.

*(In addition to the incentive package, we also had to wrestle with changing some of the high costs of programs like unemployment insurance and workers' compensation. At \$720 per year per employee compared to \$28 dollars per year that states like Texas charge, we are uncompetitive.)*

We must look at this as our state joining with



Boeing to compete against the European Union and the heavily subsidized Airbus. Right now Airbus is 21% more efficient at getting a plane out the door. We have made our best case to Boeing to continue partnering with Washington state.



### 2010 OLYMPICS

As you may know, I have worked closely with the British Columbia government during the last few years to create support here in the U.S. for the 2010 Vancouver Olympics. A memorial (bill) I authored was ultimately passed by the Legislatures in Washington, Alaska, Oregon, and Idaho, officializing their endorsement of the Canadian bid. (Contrast that to the neighbor situation in South Korea.)

As much as \$7 billion of investments will be generated even before the games begin, and busi-

ness in Washington will be able to bid on much of the work and contracts for services. Besides the legacy investments and the \$15 billion in free advertising to brand our region as separate from the rest of the West, you will see world-class competition throughout the region as international teams come in the preceding years to get acclimatized for the games.

Utah is still enjoying a 30% increase in tourism from its Olympics – and that during a recession. We should benefit even more here in Washington state, because the bonus is that the winter is when many of our local tourism-dependent businesses have their hardest time of year.